

Message Text

SECRET

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ACTION SS-25

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P 090812Z MAR 77
FM USDEL MBFR VIENNA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 2021

S E C R E T MBFR VIENNA 0103

EXDIS

DEPARTMENT PLEASE PASS DEFENSE

FROM US REP MBFR

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PARM, NATO
SUBJ: MBFR: BILATERAL DISCUSSION WITH SOVIET REP ON MANPOWER
FREEZE

REF: MBFR VIENNA 0094 (DTG 041719Z MAR 77)

1. IN DISCUSSION ON MARCH 7 WITH SOVIET REP TARASOV U.S.
REP REFERRED TO TARASOV'S INFORMAL SUGGESTION ON MARCH 3 OF
A MANPOWER FREEZE WHICH WOULD PROVIDE THAT THE WARSAW PACT
DIRECT PARTICIPANTS WOULD NOT EXCEED THEIR TABLED TOTAL OF
987,000 AND NATO DIRECT PARTICIPANTS WOULD NOT EXCEED THEIR
TABLED TOTAL OF 922,000.

2. U.S. REP SAID THAT THE WEST COULD NOT AGREE WITH THIS
SUGGESTION BECAUSE THE WEST BELIEVED, AS IT HAD MADE CLEAR,
THAT WHEN PROPERLY COUNTED, INCLUDING ALL CATEGORIES, THERE
ARE IN FACT SUBSTANTIALLY MORE THAN 987,000 EASTERN ACTIVE DUTY
MILITARY PERSONNEL IN THE AREA.

3. THE WEST COULD NOT ENTER INTO AN AGREEMENT USING THE
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987,000 FIGURE BECAUSE THIS WOULD IMPLY THE WEST THINKS THAT THE
NUMBER IS THE CORECT ONE.

4. TARASOV RESPONDED THAT HE WAS NOT SUGGESTING A FORMAL AGREEMENT
BUT MERELY AN EXCHANGE OF MUTUAL NO INCREASE COMMITMENTS WHICH
WOULD USE THE TABLED FIGURES.

5. U.S. REP RESPONDED THAT ANY SUCH MUTUALLY EXCHANGED
UNDERTAKINGS WOULD BE MADE PUBLIC AND COULD NOT BE BASED ON
A FIGURE WITH WHICH THE WEST DID NOT AGREE.

6. TARASOV SAID THAT THE EAST WOULD BE GIVING A COMMITMENT NOT
TO HAVE MORE THAN 987,000 MILITARY PERSONNEL IN THE AREA AND
WOULD BE OBLIGED TO HONOR THIS.

7. U.S. REP REITERATED THAT THE WEST BELIEVED THAT PROPERLY
COUNTED THERE WERE MORE EASTERN PERSONNEL IN THE AREA, AND THAT,
IF THE EAST UNDERTOOK NOT TO EXCEED 987,000, THE WEST WOULD THEN
HAVE TO DEMAND THE WITHDRAWAL OF THE EXCESS. PRESUMABLY THE
EAST DID NOT CONTEMPLATE THIS AND, ACCORDINGLY, THERE WOULD THEN
BE A DIRECT CONFRONTATION.

8. TARASOV SAID WESTERN ESTIMATES WERE WRONG, THAT THE WEST
WOULD EVENTUALLY HAVE TO BACK OFF FROM THEM AND THAT HE WAS
MERELY SUGGESTING A WAY FOR THE WEST TO PULL BACK FROM ITS
ESTIMATES WITH MINIMUM EMBARRASSMENT.

9. U.S. REP SAID THAT THE WEST CONTINUED TO BELIEVE THAT THE
TWO SIDES WERE APPLYING WHAT APPEARED TO BE SIMILAR COUNTING RULES
IN DIFFERENT WAYS WITH THE RESULT THAT THEY WERE NOT COUNTING
THE SAME PERSONNEL. BOTH SIDES SHOULD CONTINUE TO SEARCH FOR THE
SOURCE OF THE DISCREPANCY.

10. TARASOV SAID THAT THE EAST WAS READY TO EXCHANGE DATA WITH
RESPECT TO THE MILITARY PERSONNEL OF ALL DIRECT PARTICIPANTS.

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11. TARASOV SAID THAT HE ASSUMED THAT U.S. REP'S RESPONSE
TO HIS SUGGESTION WOULD NOT PRECLUDE HIS RAISING THE IDEA
AT AN INFORMAL.

12. U.S. REP INDICATED THAT TARASOV WAS, OF COURSE, FREE
TO DO SO. RESOR

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